

**City of Belmont
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING DECEMBER 4, 2013
MINUTES**

The regular meeting of the Belmont Parks & Recreation Commission of December 4, 2013 was called to order at 7:00 p.m. at the Belmont City Hall Council Chambers.

I. ROLL CALL

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Chair (CC) Wright, Commissioner (C) Block, Youth Commissioner (YC) Singer, C Runyan, Bortoli, Sullivan, YC Fox and C Michaels. C Wong arrived shortly after roll call.

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Parks and Recreation Director (PRD) Gervais, Recreation Manager (RM) Brunson and Secretary Saggau

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

C Bortoli moved, seconded by C Block, to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of November 6, 2013. Vote 8-0 in favor.

III. PUBLIC COMMUNICATION/COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

C Bortoli reported on the Senior Advisory Committee meeting. He reported the lunch program continues to do well. He noted with the refurbishing of the Center there will be some changes, including removal of the pool table. The Senior Van is scheduled to be replaced. C Bortoli said that he visited the Livermore Senior/Community Center and picked up their activity guide for staff to review.

C Wong arrived at 7:06 p.m.

C Michaels commented that many of the non-sport recreation programs are not offered during hours that would meet the needs for working parents. He plans to work with staff to see if these programs could be broadened so that there are more opportunities in the evening and on weekends.

PRD Gervais announced the following:

- The annual Santa Visit and Toy Drive would be held at the Fire Station on Thursday, December 12 from 5-8 pm.
- An article highlighting the softball partnership between San Mateo, Foster City and Belmont was distributed to the Commission.

- The Commission will have a Holiday Social in the Twin Pines Cottage following the meeting.

IV. AGENDA AMENDMENTS

None.

V. OLD BUSINESS

a. Update on the Progress of the Design of the Synthetic Turf Project at the Belmont Sports Complex

PRD Gervais introduced Recreation Manager George Brunson and Landscape Architect (LA) Dave Rubin of Callander & Associates. PRD Gervais reviewed the progress on this project and noted the City Council voted to select Design Alternative A-2 that was recommended by the Parks & Recreation Commission.

PRD Gervais explained the landscape architect began preparation of more detailed design for the project and a few topics for consideration have arisen. These topics include:

- Perimeter Fencing – these fields are a big investment and staff recommends that they be protected. The question on whether the fence be installed inside the pathway or outside the perimeter of the site was a subject for discussion. Staff's recommendation is that the fence be installed inside the edge of the field so that the pathway around the field is always available. PRD Gervais explained one reason for fencing is to make sure people see the rules as they enter the fields. A five-foot fence is being considered. Examples of other city's field fencing were displayed for comparison.
- Access gates on the North Field pathway.
- Field Markings – staff is proposing installing permanent lines for a baseball field, two soccer fields, and a lacrosse field on the North Field. The South Field will include markings for softball, soccer, and include two additional infields in the outfield corners for practice.
- Additional light pole in right field – It is recommended that an additional light pole be installed on the North Field in the right field area and that new light fixtures be installed on the existing poles to improve the lighting system and reduce light spillage.
- Penetrations in the turf.
- Addition of a mobile fence system to provide a definition for a home run.

PRD Gervais noted the estimate for this project has increased to \$4,100,000. He reviewed the next steps for the project.

Staff and LA Dave Rubin answered questions from the Commission.

- Dogs will not be allowed on the field.
- More energy efficient lighting would be proposed but LED is not commonly used for sports fields. The additional light pole would be on the edge of the field.
- The field material would consist of organic infill like coconut husks and cork; similar to what was installed at the Highlands Field in San Carlos.
- The fencing at Highlands is not uniform in height all around the field.

- Currently the lights at the fields are controlled by the leagues with the use of breakers to turn them on or off. New lighting could be programmable with different settings for each sport.
- The North Field does not currently have enclosed fencing.
- The lines on the fields would be permanent and cannot be changed. Currently proposed lines for the field are white for baseball, yellow for soccer and blue for lacrosse.
- Trees along the perimeter can be considered but it has been challenging to plant at this site due to the soil conditions. Also, storm water solutions need to be considered when deciding on the landscaping.
- The pathway around the field is asphalt and it would be redone with new asphalt.
- Spectator areas have not been proposed but could be included along the perimeter or by expanding paved storage areas to avoid damage to the turf from chairs and tents.
- Fencing would be vinyl-coated chain-link.
- The pathway is approximately 10 feet wide, the width of an off-street bike trail.
- The color of the field lines is not 100% consistent on all athletic fields; generally people recognize white for baseball and yellow for soccer.
- Some items such as lighting could be phased in later but should be considered before installation of the field so that it does not need to be dug up later.
- The landfill has been closed since the 1970's and at that time the site was dedicated to be recreation use and has been since it was developed in 1988. The sustainability element to this project is the reduction of water use for the fields, and the discontinued use of fertilizers and herbicides.
- There is no precedence on a multi-purpose field for a baseball mound that will be rebuilt every year for baseball and staff and the landscape architect have been working on ideas to accomplish this.
- The original estimate for this project was \$2 - \$2.5 million for the North Field and \$800,000 for the South Field.
- It is hoped that the potential electronic signboard at the site would provide some funding for the project.
- Fencing is proposed to avoid overuse by rogue teams, people driving on the field, and off-leash dog walking. Also this would provide an opportunity to get people to read the regulation signs.
- Dug-out modifications are needed to meet current accessibility requirements.
- There are some permitting agencies that have jurisdiction at the site that could create some challenges and it is unknown what impacts it would have on this project.
- The estimated reduction in water cost is approximately \$35,000/year.

Tom Snider, with Belmont United Soccer Club, Belmont-Redwood Shores AYSO and Sports Advisory Committee member, stated the consensus of the soccer folks is that the soccer fields are too long and they would prefer that they be made shorter and wider. He added there is also a need for more U-8 fields.

CC Wright proposed voting on the fencing and whether it should be installed inside the pathway or outside of the perimeter of the site. The question was raised if a fence should be installed around the field and concerns were expressed with restricting access to the community. Discussion ensued. It was decided to review the current usage of the fields and bring this topic back to the Commission for further discussion.

C Runyan commented there is a need for a place for players to sit and there should be space for that included in the design. She questioned the popularity of lacrosse and if permanent lines should be part of the design.

In response to C Sullivan's question LA Rubin explained there is some flexibility on the field sizes for soccer. The proposed sizes were created based on what currently exists on the field. RM Brunson added with field rotation there has been some size variations. YC Singer noted if the fields are made wider there should be consideration not to have the fields too close together.

C Michaels reiterated the importance when fundraising to create a cohesive plan to include other projects. He questioned if the lines could be adjusted later if lacrosse becomes popular.

CC Wright agreed if lines need to be reduced the blue lacrosse lines would be the best option as there is not that much participation in that sport at this time.

C Bortoli added one item to consider is a method to fund the replacement of the turf in the future and needed repairs.

b. Discussion of the Progress of the Barrett Ad Hoc Committee in Developing a Strategy for the Future of the Barrett Community Center

PRD Gervais reported on the progress of the Barrett Community Center Ad-Hoc Committee. The purpose of this Committee is to create a report to the City Council that includes a strategy for the future of the Barrett Community Center. They have had six meetings and spent some time getting familiar with the site. The Committee developed an outline for their report to the City Council. It includes a Recreation Gap Analysis table to evaluate the recreational opportunities currently available and what is missing. The Committee will evaluate options for the Center to see which alternatives would fill the needs of the community.

PRD Gervais requested the Commission review the outline and consider if the table includes the community's recreation needs. He explained the next steps will be completion of the report, bring it back to the Commission to review and then do a presentation to the City Council.

In response to CC Wright's questions PRD Gervais said that there would be more description in Options 1-4 in the report. He acknowledged a Joint Partnership Projects could include the idea of having a joint use at the site that includes a school and a community center.

Mike Davis – noted the Gap Analysis would be valuable for the General Plan but questioned its relevance to Barrett's future. He would like progress to be made on determining the best, most desired and practical uses for Barrett and was in favor of getting the public involved in the process so they buy into the project. He added that steps need to be determined to get to the ideal facility.

C Michaels explained the reason for Gap Analysis table was to determine the needs for the community and what would be good use of the Barrett site.

C Wong noted a Master or General Plan provides strategic direction or vision. The Gap Analysis would determine what is missing and how to best fill these needs at Barrett.

C Runyan added the gap analysis is a needs assessment to determine what is missing. When this is figured out then this can be presented to the community for their input.

C Sullivan noted polls have shown that Belmont residents are willing to pay for education expenses but they do not want to be taxed for recreational facilities. Realistic options for Barrett should be provided for consideration. He added the gap analysis will have to include some quantifiable guesses and that the comparison to other cities would be interesting. Current demand for the facilities should also be included in the chart.

RM Brunson noted that the vacant spaces at Barrett were quickly filled. There are artists in the middle wing and the department has been able to utilize the outer wing and fill those spaces.

CC Wright expressed appreciation for the work of the Ad-Hoc Committee. She noted the work done will provide a justification for what happens next. She added that room should be left for the inspiration or vision, to come up with the right thing for Barrett that the community would support.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

a. Consideration of Moving or Canceling the January 2014 Meeting

PRD Gervais explained the first Wednesday of January would be on New Year's Day and requested input from the Commission if they would like to reschedule or cancel the meeting. Following discussion the following motion was made.

C Bortoli moved, seconded by C Block, that the Commission move the January meeting to the 15th of January. Vote 9-0 in favor.

VII. DEPARTMENT REPORTS

A. Questions and Comments

PRD Gervais reported the following:

- A Tree Planting event was held on December 1st at O'Donnell Park with the 4-H and Homeview Neighborhood Association. Ten fruit trees were planted at the site.
- The Tree Giveaway was completed with 35 free trees delivered to Belmont residents.
- Information kiosks were installed by an Eagle Scout at three major trailheads.
- The San Juan Canyon item was presented to the City Council and they recommended moving forward with designating the trailheads at the end of East Laurel Creek Road and at Marsten Road. They preferred that the interpretive program be included in the budget process.
- The Senior/Community Center project is moving ahead. The Center will be closed on December 16 with completion anticipated by January 2nd.
- The City Council reorganization event will be held on December 10, 2013.
- Progress on Davey Glen Park continues. The geotechnical report has been completed.

C Bortoli commented that lighting is needed for the entrance sign for Twin Pines Park.

B. Future Agenda Items

General Plan

Summer Recreation Planning

Lack of Restrooms in Parks

Interpretive Program for Open Space

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:35 p.m.

Jonathan Gervais
Parks & Recreation Director